



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Department
Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick
Press Release**

Contact: Heather Nichols, Bonnie McGilpin, Juli Hanscom – 617-725-4025;
Alec Loftus (HHS) – 617- 573-1612

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**GOVERNOR PATRICK LAUNCHES PREVENTION &
WELLNESS PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE CARE,
LOWER COSTS**

HOLYOKE – Monday, March 31, 2014 – Governor Deval Patrick today joined state health officials, municipal leaders, legislators, community members and medical providers to announce the launch of the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF). Part of Chapter 224 health care cost containment legislation, this first-in-the-nation effort provides more than \$40 million in grants to nine community-based partnerships over four years to help fight chronic illness and improve health outcomes while reducing health care costs. The Governor made the announcement Monday morning at Holyoke Health Center.

“In Massachusetts, we believe that health care is a public good and every resident deserves access to affordable, quality care,” said Governor Deval Patrick. “These grants will help us reach that goal by funding the intervention strategies proven to work.”

The Fund supports community-based partnerships in achieving measurable health goals through research-based interventions. The goals of the Fund are to reduce rates of the most prevalent and preventable health conditions, advance healthy behaviors, increase the adoption of workplace wellness or health management programs and address health disparities. Municipalities, healthcare systems, community organizations, businesses, regional planning organizations and schools are working together to launch community-specific programs to address issues including hypertension, smoking, falls prevention among older adults and pediatric asthma.

“Through the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund, we’re able not only to implement evidence-based interventions in community and clinical settings, but also to use technological innovation to connect the two, improving the integration of care and expanding access to services,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services John Polanowicz. “By working in these unique partnerships, we can keep residents healthy in a way that takes into account the specialized public health needs of each community.”

A critical component of the program is to connect clinical and community settings through use of health information technology by sending electronic referrals to and from community resources. The e-Referral Program will allow participating community-based programs to use electronic health records (EHR) to connect directly with medical providers and report information about a patient’s participation in particular programs.

Used in both the clinical and community setting, the e-Referral Program will be used to evaluate the success of the PWTF including patient populations, services received and improved health outcomes. Ultimately, these health outcomes will be used to estimate a return on investment for particular intervention within the PWTF, as well as the PWTF program as a whole.

Monday's event included a demonstration of the state's e-Referral pilot, demonstrating the in-browser application to simulate the YMCA as an example community based organization managing a referral and providing feedback to a clinician on a sample case.

The PWTF will achieve specified outcomes by incorporating community health workers into care teams as specialists in outreach, education, direct services, and advocacy for some of the state's most vulnerable residents. As an emerging trend in health care, community health workers are a proven, cost effective way to reach disengaged populations and support linking them to clinical providers. Through its work with the grant recipients, DPH will promote the use of community health workers as an useful tool to improve patient engagement in these intervention strategies.

"Connecting healthcare systems to community resources will give people more tools to prevent and manage chronic health conditions where they live, work, and play," said DPH Commissioner Cheryl Bartlett. "Prevention and wellness are tremendously effective in helping people live healthier lives in their communities."

Initial funding of \$250,000 for up to 10 months will be distributed to partnerships to refine their proposals including their service area, health conditions/interventions and/or population(s) of focus, and capacity building. Implementation funding will be provided when the grantees meet specified benchmarks. Each partnership will be provided with enhanced support and technical assistance from the Commonwealth to further shape this work and help them achieve meaningful return on investment.

"The City of Holyoke will benefit greatly from this funding, and I applaud and thank Governor Patrick and the Massachusetts DPH for recognizing the importance of community based partnerships in order to provide quality health care for our City's most vulnerable residents," said Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse. "It truly takes the collaborative efforts of our whole community to make Holyoke a healthier place to live, and this funding will ensure that we are able to continue to provide innovative and life saving services to all of our residents."

"The Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund supports community-based prevention and wellness programs aimed at reducing the most costly and prevalent avoidable health conditions," said Senator Harriette L. Chandler, Assistant Majority Leader and Co-Chair of the Prevention for Health Caucus. "By focusing on prevention and certain quantifiable benchmarks, the Trust enables the Commonwealth to provide new ways to deliver and fund health care."

“Governor Patrick and Department of Public Health Commissioner Cheryl Bartlett are committed to improving health and wellness throughout the Commonwealth,” said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell. “They recognize the critical role that community-based partnerships can play in growing healthy behaviors and reducing the most widespread and preventable health conditions. I have no doubt that the work of the New Bedford-Fall River partnership, led by New Bedford Public Health Director, Dr. Brenda Weis, will lead to improved health outcomes and reduced health care costs in the region.”

“Preventing behaviors that require expensive health care, like substance abuse and tobacco use, helps everyone--individuals, families, neighborhoods and our healthcare system” said Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral. “These state dollars for the New Bedford Health Department will help all of us by keeping costs down while improving public health.”

List of Funded Partnerships:

Barnstable County Department of Human Services (coordinating organization)

- Community Health Center of Cape Cod
- Duffy Health Center
- Harbor Community Health Center, Hyannis
- My Life, My Health Coalition of Cape Cod
- YMCA of Cape Cod

Berkshire Medical Center (coordinating organization)

- Berkshire County Boards of Health
- Berkshire United Way
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission / Berkshire Public Health Alliance
- Fairview Hospital
- North Adams Regional Hospital
- North Berkshire Community Coalition
- Tri-town Health Department District

Boston Public Health Commission (coordinating organization)

- Action for Boston Community Development
- Boston Commission on Elderly Affairs (CBES and BSH)
- Boston Medical Center Injury Prevention Center
- Boston Public Schools
- Bowdoin Street Health Center
- Codman Square Health Center
- Dimock Center
- Dorchester House Multi-Service Center
- Ethos
- Harbor Health Services
- Health Resources in Action

- Massachusetts Health Quality Partners/The Greater Boston Aligning Forces for Quality (GB AF4Q)
- Upham's Corner Health Center
- Whittier Street Health Center

Holyoke Health Center (coordinating organization)

- City of Holyoke
- Greater Holyoke YMCA
- Holyoke Medical Center, Inc.
- River Valley Counseling Center, Inc.
- Western Mass Physician Associates, Inc.

City of Lynn (coordinating organization)

- Greater Lynn Senior Services, Inc.
- Lynn Community Health Center
- Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development
- Lynn Public Schools
- Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council

City of New Bedford Health Department (coordinating organization)

- New Bedford Health Department
- Boston Medical Center Injury Prevention Center
- Bristol Elder Services
- Catholic Social Services
- Child and Family Services, Inc.
- Fall River Health Department
- Coastline Elderly
- Fall River Housing Authority
- Fall River Public Schools
- Greater New Bedford Community Health Center, Inc.
- Healthfirst Family Care Center, Inc.
- Immigrants' Assistance Center
- InterChurch Council of Greater New Bedford
- Maguire Allergy Pediatrics
- Mass in Motion / Mass in Motion Kids
- New Bedford Housing Authority
- New Bedford Public Schools
- Partners for a Healthier Community
- Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction
- Seven Hills Behavior Health, Inc.
- Stanley Street Treatment and Resources
- Steward St Anne's Hospital Corp.
- Southcoast Health System

- Tobacco Free Community Partnership
- UMASS-Dartmouth
- YMCA Southcoast

City of Worcester (coordinating organization)

- Central MA Area Health Education Center
- Community Legal Aid, Inc.
- Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center
- Fallon Community Health Plan
- Family Health Center of Worcester, Inc.
- MA Audubon Society / Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary
- Mosaic Cultural Complex
- UMASS Medical School
- UMASS Memorial Medical Center
- VNA Network Care and Hospice
- Worcester Child Development and Head Start Program
- Worcester Public Schools

Manet Community Health Center (coordinating organization)

- Bay State Community Services, Inc.
- City of Quincy (Quincy Health Department)
- Quincy Medical Center
- South Shore Elder Services, Inc.
- South Shore Hospital
- South Shore Workforce Investment Board
- South Shore YMCA, Inc.
- Town of Weymouth

Town of Hudson (coordinating organization)

- Central MA Area Health Education Center, Inc.
- City of Marlborough
- Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center
- JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.
- Latino Health Insurance Program, Inc.
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- MetroWest Medical Center
- MetroWest YMCA
- Town of Framingham
- Town of Northborough
- YMCA of Central Massachusetts

For more information on the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund please visit:

www.mass.gov/PWTF.

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